

OLC 69-0911

30 October 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Senator J. W. Fulbright's Previous
Knowledge of Laos Operations

25X1A 1. Jack Leahy, State Department Congressional Relations, has asked us whether Senator Fulbright was ever present at any Agency briefings where our Laos operations were described. [REDACTED] is sending you a memo asking for guidance in answering a similar query from Jonathan Moore, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Southeast Asia.

2. On checking our records it appears that Senator Fulbright was present on 2 May 1961 when the Director and Dick Bissell appeared before the Foreign Relations Committee and Laos was discussed. They answered questions about the U.S. Government (and Agency) position vis-a-vis Souvanna Phouma and Phoumi, and specifically mentioned U.S. financial support provided the Laotian army with the knowledge and consent of Souvanna Phouma. (At Tab A are relevant excerpts from this testimony.)

3. On 21 February 1967, Senator Fulbright attended, as an invitee, your briefing of the CIA Senate Subcommittees during which you spoke of "our large-scale paramilitary program there," mentioned our "support and guidance for the 40,000 tribal guerrillas who continue their active defense of northwest Laos," and described the fighting in Laos as a "quiet war" where "a total of 1,661 engagements, which resulted in 2,795 confirmed enemy killed in action and 926 friendly fatalities" had occurred during the preceding year. You also noted that "aircraft play a vital part in the paramilitary effort." (Relevant excerpts from this testimony are at Tab B.)

25X1A 4. Please let us know how we should handle the State query.

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[REDACTED]
John M. Maury
Legislative Counsel



Briefings on Laos Operations with Symington S. C. Members Present

<u>TAB</u>		<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>S. C. Members Present</u>
C	1	For. Rel. (T)	22 May 61	Fulbright, Mansfield, Sym.
D		Sen. CIA S. C. 's (T)	22 Aug 61	Mansfield
L	1	Sen. CIA S. C. 's (S)	21 Feb 67	Fulbright, Mansfield
P	2	Sen. CIA S. C. 's (T)	16 July 68	Mansfield

- 1 Check transcript or prepared statement for exact language.
- 2 Laos film shown. Fulbright not present.

T-Transcript
S-Prepared Statement